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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Sixth Committee (A/50/642 and Corr.1)]

50/50. United Nations Model Rules for the Conciliation of Disputes between States

The General Assembly,

Considering that conciliation is among the methods for the settlement of disputes between States enumerated by the Charter of the United Nations in Article 33, paragraph 1, that it has been provided for in numerous treaties, bilateral as well as multilateral, for the settlement of such disputes, and that it has proved its usefulness in practice,

Convinced that the establishment of model rules for the conciliation of disputes between States which incorporate the results of the most recent scholarly work and of experience in the field of international conciliation, as well as a number of innovations which can with advantage be made in the traditional practice in that area, can contribute to the development of harmonious relations between States,

1. Commends the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization for having completed the final text of the United Nations Model Rules for the Conciliation of Disputes between States; 1/

2. Draws to the attention of States the possibility of applying the Model Rules, the text of which is annexed hereto, whenever a dispute has arisen between States which it has not been possible to solve through direct negotiations;

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 33 (A/50/33), chap. V, sect. A.

3. Requests the Secretary-General, to the extent possible and in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Model Rules, to lend his assistance to the States resorting to conciliation on the basis of those Rules;

4. Also requests the Secretary-General to make the necessary arrangements to distribute to Governments the text of the present resolution, including the annex.

87th plenary meeting
11 December 1995

ANNEX

United Nations Model Rules for the Conciliation of Disputes between States

CHAPTER I

APPLICATION OF THE RULES

Article 1

1. These rules apply to the conciliation of disputes between States where those States have expressly agreed in writing to their application.

2. The States which agree to apply these rules may at any time, through mutual agreement, exclude or amend any of their provisions.

CHAPTER II

INITIATION OF THE CONCILIATION PROCEEDINGS

Article 2

1. The conciliation proceedings shall begin as soon as the States concerned (henceforth: the parties) have agreed in writing to the application of the present rules, with or without amendments, as well as on a definition of the subject of the dispute, the number and emoluments of members of the conciliation commission, its seat and the maximum duration of the proceedings, as provided in article 24. If necessary, the agreement shall contain provisions concerning the language or languages in which the proceedings are to be conducted and the linguistic services required.

2. If the States cannot reach agreement on the definition of the subject of the dispute, they may by mutual agreement request the assistance of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to resolve the difficulty. They may also by mutual agreement request his assistance to resolve any other difficulty that they may encounter in reaching an agreement on the modalities of the conciliation proceedings.

CHAPTER III

NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT OF CONCILIATORS

Article 3

There may be three conciliators or five conciliators. In either case the conciliators shall form a commission.

Article 4

If the parties have agreed that three conciliators shall be appointed, each one of them shall appoint a conciliator, who may not be of its own nationality. The parties shall appoint by mutual agreement the third conciliator, who may not be of the nationality of any of the parties or of the other conciliators. The third conciliator shall act as president of the commission. If he is not appointed within two months of the appointment of the conciliators appointed individually by the parties, the third conciliator shall be appointed by the Government of a third State chosen by agreement between the parties or, if such agreement is not obtained within two months, by the President of the International Court of Justice. If the President is a national of one of the parties, the appointment shall be made by the Vice-President or the next member of the Court in order of seniority who is not a national of the parties. The third conciliator shall not reside habitually in the territory of the parties or be or have been in their service.

Article 5

1. If the parties have agreed that five conciliators should be appointed, each one of them shall appoint a conciliator who may be of its own nationality. The other three conciliators, one of whom shall be chosen with a view to his acting as president, shall be appointed by agreement between the parties from among nationals of third States and shall be of different nationalities. None of them shall reside habitually in the territory of the parties or be or have been in their service. None of them shall have the same nationality as that of the other two conciliators.

2. If the appointment of the conciliators whom the parties are to appoint jointly has not been effected within three months, they shall be appointed by the Government of a third State chosen by agreement between the parties or, if such an agreement is not reached within three months, by the President of the International Court of Justice. If the President is a national of one of the parties, the appointment shall be made by the Vice-President or the next judge in order of seniority who is not a national of the parties. The Government or member of the International Court of Justice making the appointment shall also decide which of the three conciliators shall act as president.

3. If, at the end of the three-month period referred to in the preceding paragraph, the parties have been able to appoint only one or two conciliators, the two conciliators or the conciliator still required shall be appointed in the manner described in the preceding paragraph. If the parties have not agreed that the conciliator or one of the two conciliators whom they have appointed shall act as president, the Government or member of the International Court of Justice appointing the two conciliators or the conciliator still required shall also decide which of the three conciliators shall act as president.

4. If, at the end of the three-month period referred to in paragraph 2 of this article, the parties have appointed three conciliators but have not been able to agree which of them shall act as president, the president shall be chosen in the manner described in that paragraph.

Article 6

Vacancies which may occur in the commission as a result of death, resignation or any other cause shall be filled as soon as possible by the method established for appointing the members to be replaced.

CHAPTER IV

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

Article 7

The commission, acting independently and impartially, shall endeavour to assist the parties in reaching an amicable settlement of the dispute. If no settlement is reached during the consideration of the dispute, the commission may draw up and submit appropriate recommendations to the parties for consideration.

CHAPTER V

PROCEDURES AND POWERS OF THE COMMISSION

Article 8

The commission shall adopt its own procedure.

Article 9

1. Before the commission begins its work, the parties shall designate their agents and shall communicate the names of such agents to the president of the commission. The president shall determine, in agreement with the parties, the date of the commission's first meeting, to which the members of the commission and the agents shall be invited.

2. The agents of the parties may be assisted before the commission by counsel and experts appointed by the parties.

3. Before the first meeting of the commission, its members may meet informally with the agents of the parties, if necessary, accompanied by the appointed counsel and experts to deal with administrative and procedural matters.

Article 10

1. At its first meeting, the commission shall appoint a secretary.

2. The secretary of the commission shall not have the nationality of any of the parties, shall not reside habitually in their territory and shall not be or have been in the service of any of them. He may be a United Nations

official if the parties agree with the Secretary-General on the conditions under which the official will exercise these functions.

Article 11

1. As soon as the information provided by the parties so permits, the commission, having regard, in particular, to the time-limit laid down in article 24, shall decide in consultation with the parties whether the parties should be invited to submit written pleadings and, if so, in what order and within what time-limits, as well as the dates when, if necessary, the agents and counsel will be heard. The decisions taken by the commission in this regard may be amended at any later stage of the proceedings.

2. Subject to the provisions of article 20, paragraph 1, the commission shall not allow the agent or counsel of one party to attend a meeting without having also given the other party the opportunity to be represented at the same meeting.

Article 12

The parties, acting in good faith, shall facilitate the commission's work and, in particular, shall provide it to the greatest possible extent with whatever documents, information and explanations may be relevant.

Article 13

1. The commission may ask the parties for whatever relevant information or documents, as well as explanations, it deems necessary or useful. It may also make comments on the arguments advanced as well as the statements or proposals made by the parties.

2. The commission may accede to any request by a party that persons whose testimony it considers necessary or useful be heard, or that experts be consulted.

Article 14

In cases where the parties disagree on issues of fact, the commission may use all means at its disposal, such as the joint expert advisers mentioned in article 15, or consultation with experts, to ascertain the facts.

Article 15

The commission may propose to the parties that they jointly appoint expert advisers to assist it in the consideration of technical aspects of the dispute. If the proposal is accepted, its implementation shall be conditional upon the expert advisers being appointed by the parties by mutual agreement and accepted by the commission and upon the parties fixing their emoluments.

Article 16

Each party may at any time, at its own initiative or at the initiative of the commission, make proposals for the settlement of the dispute. Any proposal made in accordance with this article shall be communicated immediately to the other party by the president, who may, in so doing, transmit any comment the commission may wish to make thereon.

Article 17

At any stage of the proceedings, the commission may, at its own initiative or at the initiative of one of the parties, draw the attention of the parties to any measures which in its opinion might be advisable or facilitate a settlement.

Article 18

The commission shall endeavour to take its decisions unanimously but, if unanimity proves impossible, it may take them by a majority of votes of its members. Abstentions are not allowed. Except in matters of procedure, the presence of all members shall be required in order for a decision to be valid.

Article 19

The commission may, at any time, ask the Secretary-General of the United Nations for advice or assistance with regard to the administrative or procedural aspects of its work.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION OF THE CONCILIATION PROCEEDINGS

Article 20

1. On concluding its consideration of the dispute, the commission may, if full settlement has not been reached, draw up and submit appropriate recommendations to the parties for consideration. To that end, it may hold an exchange of views with the agents of the parties, who may be heard jointly or separately.

2. The recommendations adopted by the commission shall be set forth in a report communicated by the president of the commission to the agents of the parties, with a request that the agents inform the commission, within a given period, whether the parties accept them. The president may include in the report the reasons which, in the commission's view, might prompt the parties to accept the recommendations submitted. The commission shall refrain from presenting in its report any final conclusions with regard to facts or from ruling formally on issues of law, unless the parties have jointly asked it to do so.

3. If the parties accept the recommendations submitted by the commission, a procès-verbal shall be drawn up setting forth the conditions of acceptance. The procès-verbal shall be signed by the president and the secretary. A copy thereof signed by the secretary shall be provided to each party. This shall conclude the proceedings.

4. Should the commission decide not to submit recommendations to the parties, its decision to that effect shall be recorded in a procès-verbal signed by the president and the secretary. A copy thereof signed by the secretary shall be provided to each party. This shall conclude the proceedings.

Article 21

1. The recommendations of the commission will be submitted to the parties for consideration in order to facilitate an amicable settlement of the dispute. The parties undertake to study them in good faith, carefully and objectively.

2. If one of the parties does not accept the recommendations and the other party does, it shall inform the latter, in writing, of the reasons why it could not accept them.

Article 22

1. If the recommendations are not accepted by both parties but the latter wish efforts to continue in order to reach agreement on different terms, the proceedings shall be resumed. Article 24 shall apply to the resumed proceedings, with the relevant time-limit, which the parties may, by mutual agreement, shorten or extend, running from the commission's first meeting after resumption of the proceedings.

2. If the recommendations are not accepted by both parties and the latter do not wish further efforts to be made to reach agreement on different terms, a procès-verbal signed by the president and the secretary of the commission shall be drawn up, omitting the proposed terms and indicating that the parties were unable to accept them and do not wish further efforts to be made to reach agreement on different terms. The proceedings shall be concluded when each party has received a copy of the procès-verbal signed by the secretary.

Article 23

Upon conclusion of the proceedings, the president of the commission shall, with the prior agreement of the parties, deliver the documents in the possession of the secretariat of the commission either to the Secretary-General of the United Nations or to another person or entity agreed upon by the parties. Without prejudice to the possible application of article 26, paragraph 2, the confidentiality of the documents shall be preserved.

Article 24

The commission shall conclude its work within the period agreed upon by the parties. Any extension of this period shall be agreed upon by the parties.

CHAPTER VII

CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE COMMISSION'S WORK AND DOCUMENTS

Article 25

1. The commission's meetings shall be closed. The parties and the members and expert advisers of the commission, the agents and counsel of the parties, and the secretary and the secretariat staff, shall maintain strictly the confidentiality of any documents or statements, or any communication concerning the progress of the proceedings unless their disclosure has been approved by both parties in advance.

2. Each party shall receive, through the secretary, certified copies of any minutes of the meetings at which it was represented.

3. Each party shall receive, through the secretary, certified copies of any documentary evidence received and of experts' reports, records of investigations and statements by witnesses.

Article 26

1. Except with regard to certified copies referred to in article 25, paragraph 3, the obligation to respect the confidentiality of the proceedings and of the deliberations shall remain in effect for the parties and for members of the commission, expert advisers and secretariat staff after the proceedings are concluded and shall extend to recommendations and proposals which have not been accepted.

2. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the parties may, upon conclusion of the proceedings and by mutual agreement, make available to the public all or some of the documents that in accordance with the preceding paragraph are to remain confidential, or authorize the publication of all or some of those documents.

CHAPTER VIII

OBLIGATION NOT TO ACT IN A MANNER WHICH MIGHT HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE CONCILIATION

Article 27

The parties shall refrain during the conciliation proceedings from any measure which might aggravate or widen the dispute. They shall, in particular, refrain from any measures which might have an adverse effect on the recommendations submitted by the commission, so long as those recommendations have not been explicitly rejected by either of the parties.

CHAPTER IX

PRESERVATION OF THE LEGAL POSITION OF THE PARTIES

Article 28

1. Except as the parties may otherwise agree, neither party shall be entitled in any other proceedings, whether in a court of law or before arbitrators or before any other body, entity or person, to invoke any views expressed or statements, admissions or proposals made by the other party in the conciliation proceedings, but not accepted, or the report of the commission, the recommendations submitted by the commission or any proposal made by the commission, unless agreed to by both parties.

12. Acceptance by a party of recommendations submitted by the commission in no way implies any admission by it of the considerations of law or of fact which may have inspired the recommendations.

CHAPTER X

COSTS

Article 29

The costs of the conciliation proceedings and the emoluments of expert advisers appointed in accordance with article 15, shall be borne by the parties in equal shares.